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## Labor and Labor Organizations

*The Solution of the Child Labor Problem.* By SCOTT NEARING.  
(New York: Moffat, Yard and Company. 1911. Pp. viii,  
145. \$1.00.)

This book contributes little that is new to the discussion of the child labor problem except the suggestion that the time is ripe for a change of emphasis in the method of attack. Five of the six chapters of the book are largely given over to a conveniently brief re-statement of the case against child labor, with much miscellaneous quotation from well-known advocates of child labor reform.

It is pointed out that the present reform movement will lead to no really adequate solution of the problem if it is concerned wholly with prohibitive legislation excluding children from the factory, whereas "the two primary forces which are sending children to work,—family necessity and an uncongenial school system,—are in no measure altered by such an exclusion." The book contains a very timely protest against overemphasis on the fourteen to sixteen-year-old period as a suitable one for children to begin work. Setting up the "fourteen-year minimum" as a fetish may later prove an obstacle in the way of the adoption of some more suitable test of the child's fitness for work than an arbitrary age limit. It may be noted as an example of the rather careless way in which the book is written that we find the writer on another page taking space to argue that it is harmful for a young girl to "spend the years from twelve to twenty inside of the four dark, dirty walls amid whirring machines."

The three steps in the "Program for Child Labor Reform" are not, as the author suggests, "almost obvious" as a result of his very brief discussion, and it is hoped that he may later attempt a more adequate treatment of the subject with a thoroughgoing discussion of the various means of carrying out the constructive policy which he suggested. The book will undoubtedly serve as a useful tonic to child labor reformers and other interested persons in urging them to develop a reform movement on broadly constructive lines and to beware of the danger of tempting the community to regard half-way measures or first steps as a desired goal.

EDITH ABBOTT.